Highlights of This Newsletter:

On page 2 - Hepatitis B viral load now done at the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory.

On page 3 - Description of the new HIV point-of-care testing being introduced in Saskatchewan.

Page 4 reviews the new format for the STD report for Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae.

Our Client Survey Summary is on page 5.

REMEMBER - Client reminders on page 6 followed by the contact/emergency numbers on page 7.

Influenza Testing:

The bar graph below identifies the daily number of patient specimens received at the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory for influenza testing since September 2, 2009, as well as a five day rolling average. Rolling averages offer a method of smoothing time series data to reduce effects of random variation and reveal underlying trends. The figure represents the second wave of the pandemic influenza, which peaked during the first week of November. By mid December there were only occasional nasopharyngeal swabs that were positive for pandemic influenza. During the last two weeks of December parainfluenza has become the main respiratory pathogen identified in nasopharyngeal swabs submitted to Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory.
HBV DNA Viral Load:

Commencing in January 2010, the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory (SDCL) will be performing hepatitis B (HBV) DNA viral load testing on-site. This test was previously referred to the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg and often took three weeks to receive results. Testing HBV viral loads at the SDCL will improve turn-around-times.

The new HBV DNA viral load test will run in immunoserology. The sample requirement is EDTA Plasma, freshly drawn specimens (whole blood) may be held at 2-4°C for up to 6 hours, prior to centrifugation. After centrifugation, remove plasma from cells. Freeze sample. Ship specimens frozen on dry ice. This test report will be very similar to the current HIV and HCV viral load test reports.

The numerical value will be a complete number and will not be expressed as an exponent value as was previously done by the referral lab.

Results will be reported as either “Not detected” or a numerical value indicating a detectable viral load.

HBV viral load will be reported in IU/mL, with a test/report comment stating the necessary conversion factor for copies/mL.

Immunoserology:

1. Virology Serology Testing - CMV, Measles and Parvovirus results that are IgM positive or IgM indeterminate will no longer be tested for IgG antibodies. If symptoms persist and are consistent with disease please resubmit a convalescent serum sample.

2. TPHA Test - As of September 2009, the Treponema pallidum haemaglutination (TPHA) test is no longer available at the SDCL and has been replaced with the Treponema pallidum particle agglutination (TPPA) test.

   In the past, SDCL would refer all TPHA indeterminate results to the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) for confirmation with a TPPA test. This will no longer be necessary and should therefore decrease our turn-around-times for reporting of syphilis results. Under special circumstances, alternate confirmatory testing will still be provided by the NML.

3. Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI) - Chlamydia pneumoniae has recently been renamed Chlamydia pneumoniae. On all requisitions requesting Mycoplasma pneumoniae, but with influenza-like illness checked on the requisition, SDCL will test for both Chlamydia pneumoniae and Mycoplasma pneumoniae antibodies.

   The submission requirements are as follows:

   **Specimen** 3 mL Serum (SST)

   **Collection** Serum (SST): Collect blood in serum separator vacutainer (SST). Centrifuge.

   Aliquot required amount of serum into 12 x 75 mm plastic tube as soon as possible. This will assist in preserving specimen integrity.

   **Requisition #** Viral Serology HEALTH 13-18 03/08
HIV Point-of-Care (POC) Testing:

In recognition of World AIDS Day on December 1, 2009, the Minister of Health announced the HIV Point-of-Care (POC) testing initiative. This is a pilot program that will be implemented in selected hospitals and clinics in Saskatchewan beginning in the first quarter of 2010. The HIV POC testing will target four populations:

- pregnant women near term or in labour who have not had a previous HIV test, or have had a recent test and are at risk for HIV.
- in cases of blood/body fluid exposures, testing of the source patient to determine if the exposed person should be offered prophylaxis/treatment.
- acutely ill patients who would be treated with different medications if HIV positive.
- individuals who are at high risk for HIV or whose HIV status is unknown.

In the pilot program, the HIV POC testing will only be done on a venous blood sample. All samples, both negative and positive will be sent to Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory (SDCL) for routine HIV testing (3mL of serum will be required). In conjunction with the introduction of POC testing a new HIV requisition has been introduced. This form will facilitate the collection of risk-factor data by the Ministry of Health. Please indicate the appropriate indication for testing (blood and body fluid exposure, women near term or pre-natal, or acutely ill patient) or the applicable risk factors for an at risk client. The requisition will also capture the tester identification number that will be assigned to each individual trained to do the POC test. This will help ensure quality control. The new requisitions can be used by labs doing regular testing as well as HIV POC testing sites.

The initiative will use the INSTI kit from BioLytical. For the pilot, SAHO has purchased the POC testing kits. They will be distributed through the Materials Management at SDCL. This will ensure that all sites use the same lot number. Wet lab training will be offered in the first week in March, 2010.

Enclosed with this newsletter please find two information packages:

(i) a tear sheet titled, HIV Point of Care Kits for Health Care Workers, and
(ii) a pamphlet for patients, titled HIV Point of Care Testing.

They can also be obtained from the websites:
www.health.gov.sk.ca/hiv-point-of-care-test and

For additional information on the program call the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health HIV/BBP/IDU Consultant at (306) 787-7260.
New STD Panel Reporting Information:

- With the implementation of the new Labware computer system at SDCL there have been some changes made to the way the STD Panel positive results are reported.

- If a specimen is positive for either *C. trachomatis* or *N. gonorrhoeae* (or both), the unconfirmed result is sent out as soon as testing is complete (to avoid delays in getting results back to the client). This report will indicate that the test will be re-tested using confirmatory assay if necessary. The positive specimen is then given a new accession number which will appear at the bottom of the original report as an Associated Sample.

- The confirmatory samples are batched and tested once a week. A final report is then issued with the *C. trachomatis* or *N. gonorrhoeae* confirmed NAAT result which will state that the specimen was previously positive and tested positive with a confirmatory test with a different target. The lab number on the report under Associated Sample is the lab number of the first report.

Reminders regarding the use of outbreak numbers:

1. Notify the SDCL as soon as an outbreak is declared by the MHO by sending the following information to plevett@health.gov.sk.ca. Include the institution where the outbreak is occurring, the type of outbreak (respiratory, gastrointestinal or other). A point-source food-poisoning outbreak should also be indicated, as additional lab tests will be required. Indicate the data of onset, the number of sick patients and the likely arrival data of specimens.

2. In order to track outbreak specimens in SDCL’s LabWare computer system, it is essential that the outbreak number format is followed precisely. The only correct format for outbreak numbers is: ABCD-2009-001 where the letters indicate the health region, followed by a dash, the year, followed by a dash and the 3-digit outbreak number issued by the Medical Health Officer (MHO).

Health Region Codes:

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<th>Code</th>
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<td>KTHR</td>
<td>Kelsey Trail</td>
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Note that most health regions have a 4 letter acronym whereas some have only 3 letter acronyms.

3. If you need to call SDCL for results, please call Dr. Paul Levett (787-3135) or Niki Coffin (798-4153). We can check the status of the specimens without distracting our techs from their bench work. Please do not call the laboratory section or specimen management asking for results.

4. For respiratory outbreaks use the pandemic/SRI form with the orange borders and complete this form as fully as possible.

5. The results of tests assigned an outbreak number are reported to the MHO. This ensures that MHOs are notified of all results from outbreak specimens, whether a notifiable disease has been confirmed or not.
July 28, 2009 Computer Survey:
SDCL would like to take a moment to thank you for responding to the survey sent to your facility on July 28, 2009. After the April 2009 implementation of SDCL’s new computer system, our IT department has prioritized the issues clients have identified in the survey and they continue to work to resolve the issues. SDCL continues to monitor the client’s missing and pending results.

Thank you.

Survey was sent to 160 clients with a total of 78 (49%) responses. Percentages Based on 78 Client Responses

The Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory will be moving to the new facility in February 2010. Our new address will be 5 Research Drive, Regina, SK, S4S 0A4.

Further instructions on transportation will be sent out in the second week of February 2010.
Specimen and Requisition Reminders:
Please help SDCL reduce turnaround time and thus improve patient care by accurately submitting specimens and requisitions. See attached sample requisition.

Newborn Screening
Please include the mandatory information on each neonatal screening card. All dried blood spot sample cards are securely stored for several years in compliance with government retention guidelines and it is imperative that all of the information in the list below is recorded on each collection card.

- Baby's Last name
- Baby's PHN
- Date and time of birth
- Date and time of collection
- Mother's name
- Mother's address
- Return address of sender
- Ordering and attending physician name with initial(s)
- Gestational age
- Gender

When collecting PKU blood spot samples, please refer to Appendix A "PKU How to Collect an Acceptable Blood Spot Specimen" in SDCL's online Compendium of Tests at the following link: www.health.gov.sk.ca/compendium

If you have any questions, please contact Newborn Screening Lab, at telephone number (306) 787-3142.

Vitamin D:
To reduce delays, please submit frozen Vitamin D specimens on a separate requisition with no other tests ordered on that same sample. Some of SDCL's more specialized tests are batched and if other tests are ordered on the same specimen, unnecessary delays can occur.

Ionized Calcium Update:
Effective January 18, 2010, Ionized Calcium specimens will no longer be tested at Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory. As part of our specimen transfer service, SDCL will forward all Ionized Calcium specimens to the Regina General Hospital for analysis. The collection requirements are the same and RGH will provide results directly to the clients.

To identify and prevent accidental opening of the Ionized Calcium tubes, please place the Ionized Calcium sample inside a biohazard bag and insert the completed requisition in the pocket on the outside of the biohazard bag. Roll the bag around the specimen and insert into a urine foam slot inside the Rubbermaid container in your specimen transport totes. Specimens will be transferred to Regina General Hospital.

Please distribute this information to all applicable staff within your region.

Should you have questions regarding this change, please contact Jeff Eichhorst, Chemistry Section Manager at 306-787-3284 or Debbie Caswell, Chemistry Supervisor at 306-787-3193.

RBC Folate Reminder
SDCL requires the hematocrit level and copies of the CBC reports for each RBC Folate test order. Please refer to the special handling instructions from SDCL’s online compendium of tests, www.health.gov.sk.ca/compendium

RBC Folate Special Handling Instructions
NOTE: RBC Folate testing will be done ONLY if the CBC is abnormal or if patient has neurological or other symptoms suggestive of folate deficiency. This information MUST be supplied on the requisition or sample will not be tested. CBC including Hematocrit MUST be supplied. Please staple CBC report to RBC Folate order.
The Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory (SDCL) phone tree (306) 787-3131 has been created to help assist with timely response to client inquiries. Provided is a list of the tree numbers and information that clients will access when choosing a number.

Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday
Evenings and Weekend Emergency and After Hours Service, see #8 for cell numbers.

Press 1: Test Results or to arrange STAT Testing
Identify who you are, institution and if you are calling for:
   a) Lab results;
   b) Specimen receipt and/or status;
   c) STAT testing (organ donors or needle stick exposure), call will be transferred to the appropriate section; or
   d) Requests for technical information, call will be transferred to appropriate section.

Press 2: Compendium Information (listen only) - To access the on-line compendium go to www.health.gov.sk.ca/compendium. If you do not have Internet access and would like to receive either a CD or a paper copy of the compendium please call Clinical Support at 787-8636.

Press 3: Out of Province or Country Referrals - For information on tests referred out-of-province or country.

Press 4: Exceptions to Provide Missing Information - To provide missing specimen information that has been requested by SDCL staff.

Press 5: Maternal Serum Screening - For results on maternal serum screening samples submitted.

Press 6: Water Samples - For results on water samples submitted.

Press 7: Shipping and Supplies - For example, requests for requisitions or transport media such as SAF, Carey Blair or viral for specimens submitted to the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory.

Press 8: Emergency and After Hours Service (Evenings and Weekend) (listen only)
   STAT Toxicology 536-4653
   STAT Serology/Microbiology/Virology 537-0639

Press 9: H1N1
If you wish to repeat this menu please stay on the line.

Paper Requests:
1. Laboratory does not accept verbal test requests and requires you to fax in a request/requisition for any additional testing.
2. If patient cannot be identified, as in "circle of care" then we require a "signed release of medical information form"faxed to us at (306) 787-9122.

REMEMBER Call (306) 787-3131 for information from the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory.
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<td><strong>Preliminary:</strong> If tests are still pending for an accession, a preliminary report will be generated with just the results that have been authorized on it.</td>
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<td><strong>Final:</strong> When all tests on an accession are authorized, a final report will be generated.</td>
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<td><strong>Amended:</strong> If a FINAL report has gone out, any subsequent reports on that same accession will go out as amended.</td>
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<td><strong>Authorized</strong> Results have been verified and released.</td>
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<td><strong>In Progress</strong> Testing has begun, but is not complete.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Incomplete</strong> The sample has been received for testing, but no testing has taken place yet.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cancelled</strong> The test has been cancelled.</td>
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<td><strong>Pending</strong> If a preliminary report is generated, the tests that are not yet authorized, will show up as pending.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Associated Samples</strong> Occur as a result of a single specimen sent to SDCL that involves tests that are done across multiple accession areas (E.g. Bacteriology, Chemistry, Virology, Immunoserology etc.). In order to decrease the turn-around time for the result, each accession area will send out their own result report for the tests they have completed.</td>
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</table>
# Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory Hours of Operation for 2010 Stat Holidays

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Jan 01/10</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Day Feb 15/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good Friday April 02/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria Day May 24/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada Day Jul 01/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floating Holiday July 02/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 10:00 to 2:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sask. Day Aug 02/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 10:00 &amp; 2:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labour Day Sep 06/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Oct 11/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remembrance Day - Nov 11/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christmas Day Dec 28/10</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 11:00 to 1:00</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxing Day Dec 27/10</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 2 hours</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Reduced Staff 8:00-12:00</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
<td>No staff scheduled</td>
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</table>

* Indicates that there are further comments about the department below.

**Molecular Diagnostics** – On call for WNV PCR (seasonal) and for cell, tissue & organ transplant.

**Immunology** – One staff member on call 24/7 for needlestick, transplant or approved Stats.

**Chem/Tox/Endo/Neonatal** – Toxicology is on call. Concerns or requests for chemistry and for newborn screening can be directed to Jeff Eichhorst @ 533-3046 or Dr. D. Lehotay @ 533-6532.

**IT Office** – On call from 8:00 to 4:00 on all Stats.
**Specimen & Requisition Reminders:**

Please help SDCL reduce turnaround time and thus improve patient care by accurately submitting specimens and requisitions.

### Patient Demographics
- **MUST:**
  - Include the complete last name and first names
  - Include the patient’s address for all MHO reportable test orders.

### Requisitions/packing slips MUST contain the patient’s Personal Health Number (PHN) and Birthdate

### Physician’s Last Name, First Name or Initials MUST be included on all requisitions.
- Include Physician’s MCIB #
- Indicate if out of province physician

### Please do not use:
- Interns or residents
- Abbreviated last names or ‘Nick’ names for physicians

To ensure results are sent to the correct location, include complete return address.

### Note: All specimens must have two unique identifiers:
- Patient Last & First Names
- PHN
- Birthdate

### Physician’s Name (include initials)

### Return Address (Doctor/Clinic/Hospital)

### Additional Information

- **Specimen Type**
  - Include the complete last name and first names
  - Include the patient’s address for all MHO reportable test orders

- **Requisitions/packing slips MUST contain the patient’s Personal Health Number (PHN) and Birthdate**

- **Physician’s Last Name, First Name or Initials MUST be included on all requisitions.**
- **Include Physician’s MCIB #**
- **Indicate if out of province physician**

- **Please do not use:**
  - Interns or residents
  - Abbreviated last names or ‘Nick’ names for physicians

- **To ensure results are sent to the correct location, include complete return address**

- **Note: All specimens must have two unique identifiers:**
  - Patient Last & First Names
  - PHN
  - Birthdate

- **Physician’s Name (include initials)**

- **Return Address (Doctor/Clinic/Hospital)**

- **Please ensure that requisitions and specimens are properly labeled.**

### Specimen Type
- **Serum**
- **Unite**
- **Plasma**
- **Blood**
- **CSF**
- **Gastric**
- **Other (specify)**

### Additional Information

- **If this is 24 hr. urine collection, enter volume ________ (Liters/day) **
- **Body wt. ________ kg**

- **Dr.’s Name**

- **Phone report (_____) _________**

### Tests
- **Estradiol**
- **Progesterone**
- **Prolactin**
- **Testosterone**
- **SHBG/FAI**
- **LH & FSH**
- **B12**
- **Ferritin**
- **Iron Studies**
- **Magnesium**
- **Cortisol**
- **17-OHP**
- **HGH**
- **PTH (Intact)***
- **ACTH***
- **C-Peptide***
- **Lead**
- **Gastrin**
- **Insulin**
- **RBC Folate**

### Drugs of Abuse – Urine 5 Panel
- **Amphetamines**
- **Benzodiazepines**
- **Cannabinoids**
- **Cocaine**
- **Opiates**

### Drugs of Abuse: (other)

### Toxicology Tests Reason for Request
- **Therapeutic**
- **Overdose**
- **Other**
- **Drugs suspected (specify)**

### Other tests requested (specify)

### CBC result required for RBC folates

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* See Test in compendium for special handling
** CBC result required for RBC folates

---

Health 13 126 06/10